

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

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Kitsap County awarded farmland planning grant



The Washington State Office of Farmland Preservation recently awarded Kitsap County with a technical assistance grant of \$25,000 for the development of farmland preservation programs. Kitsap County is one of eight grant recipients statewide.

A primary objective of the assistance grant is to help Kitsap in the development of an Agricultural Strategic Plan for the County and identifying and prioritizing land eligible for preservation. Work accomplished through the grants will be completed by June 30, 2011.

"Exciting things are happening in Kitsap County in terms of food and farming. We grow some high quality foods, and see more variety at community farmers' markets, grocery stores, and restaurants," said County Commissioner Charlotte Garrido. "Preserving farmland is important to continuing our agricultural tradition. It helps connect people who want to farm with available land -- and supports sustainable local food systems now and for future generations."

Three local entities have committed \$18,000 in matching funds through in kind and staff donation. The local groups are the Kitsap Conservation District (\$8,000), WSU Extension (\$8,000) and Kitsap CO Dept. of Community Development (\$2,000).

Grant funding is provided through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, a statewide grant program administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office.

Gov. Gregoire suspends state rule making process



Gov. Chris Gregoire recently signed an executive order suspending and limiting the state rule making process to help small businesses and local governments as the state continues its economic recovery.

Gregoire has directed state agencies to suspend new rule development and adoption. She also directed the Office of Financial Management to identify circumstances in which rule making may be authorized. OFM's guidelines allow agencies to continue with rule making proceedings if the rule is required by federal or state law, required by a court order, or critically necessary to manage budget shortfalls, maintain fund solvency or for revenue generating activities. Agencies would also be allowed to move forward with rules that are necessary to protect the public from significant public health, safety and welfare risks, as well as those rules that are requested or supported by the regulated entities, local governments or businesses that it affects.

The executive order extends the suspension on rulemaking through Dec. 31st, 2011.

To read a copy of the executive order, visit: [Executive Order 10-06 -Rulemaking Suspension \(PDF\)](#)

To read a copy of the exemptions outlined by OFM, go to: [OFM Exemption Guidelines \(PDF\)](#)

The Department of Revenue is currently putting on hold their update for WAC 458-20-210 (the farm tax rule), which discusses how taxes apply to agriculture-related activities and purchases of tangible personal property by farmers. Also impacted by the rulemaking order is the Department of Ecology's rulemaking process. For updates on what is being suspended and what is proceeding, go to: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/laws-rules/docs/rulesuspension_exemptions.html

Stay in contact and sign up for the OFP-Newsletter!

Send an e-mail addressed to jgiuntoli@scc.wa.gov with the subject title:
"add to Newsletter"

Email frequency is around one a month

Tax Information for Washington Farmers



The Department of Revenue (DOR) has created a page on their website just for farmers and agricultural business (<http://dor.wa.gov/farmers>). The intent is to have one location where farmers can go for updated information on taxes, incentives, rules and other changes that affect them. DOR has been making a real effort to make information easily available to taxpayers, and this is one example.

Learn more by going to: <http://dor.wa.gov/farmers>. Join their [email distribution list](#) and receive tax information and updates specifically related to farms and agriculture.

Revised state water legislation open for comments

The Washington Department of Ecology is working to reform its water management practices to meet increasing demands for water in a time of limited new water supplies.

The Water Resources Program of Ecology recently released their report titled:

“Water Resources Program Functions and Funding Structure-Recommendations for a Sustainable and Efficient Program.”



To begin to implement the recommendations in the report, Ecology is seeking legislative authority to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the state Water Resources Program and reduce the program's reliance and impact on taxpayer funding through the State General Fund.

For details on the legislation and to submit comments, go to: [Water Smart Washington - Ecology](#)

Funding for Agriculture and Sustainable Food

The 1772 Foundation, Inc. has announced that grant funding will be made available for sustainable food systems and agricultural endeavors in 2011. All organizations who wish to be considered should send a one-page letter of inquiry through the foundation's website. The foundation is particularly interested in the following: food hub development; historic sites that promote agricultural education; urban agriculture; farmer training; farm to cafeteria programs; innovative approaches to sustainable food systems; heritage breeds and heirloom vegetable and fruit protection and propagation; and youth farm education.

Letters of inquiry will be accepted until January 28, 2011.

[1772 Foundation Funding for Agriculture and Sustainable Food \(PDF\)](#) or

<http://www.1772foundation.org/content/1772/announcements/announcementsfor2011agriculture.pdf>

Seattle area Happy Hour for Young Farmers!

Please join Community By Design to introduce their Small Farm Incubator Project, talk about what you've learned farming in and around the Pacific Northwest, and explore how to best facilitate a thriving local small-farm future. We'll provide pizza and salad, you bring your creative thoughts and ideas on farming and permaculture!

Date & Time: Tuesday, December 7, 2010 from 6pm to 9pm

Venue: Tutta Bella Pizzeria

Address: 4411 Stone Way, Seattle WA 98103 [\[Map\]](#)

Who's Invited: Young farmers, aspiring farmers, permaculturalists, and anyone who's interested in exploring new approaches to long-term farm leases, financing of small-farm businesses, regenerative land stewardship, and more!

RSVP: info@communitybydesignllc.org

For more information, go to: www.communitybydesignllc.org or download the flyer

Webinar Series: Managing Volatility in Agriculture

A webinar series on Managing Volatility in Agriculture will be held December 8, 9, 15, and 16. The four, one hour, interactive segments, will be kicked off on December 8 with presentations on the short and long term pressures creating volatility, and a discussion on how and why producers should approach their businesses to manage the sharp ups and downs much of American Agriculture is experiencing.

Each one hour presentation consists of:

- Two leaders with knowledge and experience as presenters
- An outline of the issues to be discussed
- Identifying tools that producers can use in their decision making
- Time for interaction with presenters on each segment.

Details on the program including speakers and how to join the web seminar will follow in two weeks. If you want to make sure you don't miss the next announcement, please send an email to, jnewkirk@wsu.edu, with a simple statement, "Let me Know".

Seminar Segments: (Each segment starts at 9 AM Pacific)

- December 8: Volatility in American Agriculture; Causes, Insights, and Management Principles
- December 9: Volatility and the Livestock Industry
- December 15: Volatility and Grains
- December 16: Volatility and Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (tools with an emphasis on food safety)

Seattle Public Radio focuses on beginning farmers

The average age of the American farmer is 57, and getting older. Who will grow our food when this generation passes on? Farms used to be kept in the family and passed from generation to generation. In this age of large-scale industrialized farming do we need family farms anymore? What type of young person gets into farming these days? Today we host a panel of young farmers, and people helping them out. What challenges do modern day farmers face? How do people become farmers? Listen to the podcast by going to: <http://www.kuow.org/program.php?id=21741>

Grow a Profitable Food, Farm or Fish Business

Enterprise for Equity is working with several food based businesses and in December 2010 will be offering another business training program designed for "Food, Farm, and Fish" based businesses. At the end of these trainings the participant will have a written business plan for their small enterprise. Feel free to contact training manager Beth Oppliger at (360) 704-3375, if you (or someone you know) would like to take this training. To learn about dates and what you can expect in the training sessions, or to register, visit their [website](#) or download the [flyer](#).

In short - In short - In short

NRCS: Signatures on the Land	U.S. Senate Ag Committee names new Chair, Post election shakeups are always a guarantee. The U.S. Senate will see a new chair of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee in Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI). Senator Stabenow, represents the second-most diverse agricultural economy in the country and has been a vocal proponent of specialty crops and biofuels.	Poultry Processing Webinar Webinar: "Poultry Processing Exemptions: What they Mean and How they Work" December 7, 10:00 - 11:00am Join a few minutes before start time by going to the following webpage. http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/nichemeat
Signatures on the Land (PDF)		

Program provides incentives to save energy, money on the farm

It takes a lot of personal energy to run a dairy farm. It also takes a good deal of the electrical kind. But now thanks to a program being offered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), dairy farmers in Yakima and Thurston counties soon may be able to significantly reduce their energy consumption, save money – and receive financial assistance in the process. The program, available this year to dairy farmers in Yakima and Thurston counties, is being offered through NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and will focus on energy used by dairy facilities.

Read more: http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov/news/news_releases/EQIP_NR_110210.html

Federal Conservation program guide for farmers/ranchers

This [new publication](#) offers an overview of the major federal conservation programs that provide resources for farmers and ranchers to enhance and maintain sustainable farming and ranching practices. The level of available conservation resources for this area has dramatically increased since 2002. This guide helps farmers and ranchers make their way through the often complex and difficult application processes. Access to these resources can open new opportunities to preserve agricultural lands, develop sustainable practices, and open new markets.

To view this publication, go to: http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/PDF/federal_resources.pdf

Salmon Safe Certification is Expanding

Throughout the Pacific Northwest numerous farms and vineyards have become Salmon Safe certified, totaling over 60,000 acres. More than 200 vineyards and 60 farms in Western Washington have been certified. One of the largest farms is Wilcox Farms, who is an egg producer of over 1.25 million hens and received Salmon Safe certification on their 1,800 acres.

Until now the program has been focused mainly in Western Washington, Northern Oregon, and the Walla Walla area. Washington Water Project of Trout Unlimited is broadening the scope of the program to include the Central Columbia Basin. Washington Water Project is partnering with the NRCS and local conservation districts to identify potential candidates for this program.

Salmon Safe works to increase water quality in rivers and streams by improving biodiversity, reducing farm chemicals that end up in runoff, and promoting other habitat quality projects. Additionally, Salmon Safe certifies the entire farm, not individual crops. In exchange for certification the landowner obtains use of the label which opens a wide array of marketing opportunities, most of which are already established. Salmon Safe is yet another tool to help promote local agriculture while supporting farmers who practice sustainable methods. **If you know a farmer who may be interested in becoming certified please contact Jeri Timm at 509-881-7690 or email to jtimm@tu.org. For more information go to www.salmonsafe.org.**

Western SARE: Grant Funding Opportunity

The Western Center for Risk Management Education (Western Center) recently announced a funding opportunity for projects that help farm and ranch families succeed through targeted risk management strategies. Awards will fund projects conducted between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Grant awards are generally between \$5,000 and \$50,000, however there is no absolute upper or lower limit on the funds provided to a single project.

Application Process: Go to the [Western Center website](#) and select "[Competitive Grants Program](#)". The two-stage online grants application process (Pre-Proposal and Full Proposal application) is fully explained in the Western Center's 2011 Request for Applications (RFA). The RFA is the binding document on application instructions. It is very important that you read and follow all of the instructions in the RFA. Applicants who view, read and follow the instructions provided in the RFA and the [Proposal Resources](#) will have a far greater chance of success in receiving funds from the Western Center.

Questions or comments regarding the RFA or the webinars may be directed to Jo Ann Warner, 509-477-2168, warnerj@wsu.edu or Center Director, Jon Newkirk, 509-477-2196, jnewkirk@wsu.edu.

Three farms receive “Stewardship Farm of the Year” award



Mitchell Bay Farm, San Juan Island

The non-profit group Farming and the Environment recently announced the Vim Wright Stewardship Farm of the Year Award winners in Washington. This year, three farms share the distinction of being farms of the year. Award winners are:

1st place - Let Us Farm LLC Oakville, WA owned and operated by Steve Hallstrom and Cecelia Boulais. Runner-up awards go to: Mitchell Bay Farm San Juan Island owned and operated by Bruce and Colleen Howe-Gregory and Lenwood Farms Inc. Connell WA owned and operated by Brad Bailie.

The Vim Wright Stewardship Farm of the Year Award is awarded annually by Farming and the Environment, a non-profit organization working to protect both the economic vitality of farming in Washington State and to promote the environmental stewardship of the state's working agricultural landscape.



Let Us Farm LLC, Oakville, WA

Federal Grant Funding Opportunity: Beginning Farmers

The USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is now accepting grant proposals to the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program for projects to provide education, training, mentoring and internships to beginning farmers and ranchers that will help them run successful and sustainable farms. This year, fiscal year 2011, NIFA will make \$19 million available through the program, for organizations that will implement programs to help beginning farmers and ranchers. **For details, go to: http://www.nifa.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2010news/10281_bfrdp_11.html**

Proposals are due December 22, 2010.

Flooding and Flood Preparedness Bus Tour for Farmers

WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program welcomes farmers interested in learning about flood preparedness and flooding on the farm to attend an all day mobile workshop. They will be visiting 5 unique farming operations and hear what measures they have adopted to deal with flooding issues, and how they have dealt with permitting and regulations.

When: Friday, December 03, 2010 at 8:15 AM

Producers will show their facilities while sharing their farm history. While on the farm, host farmers will share in-depth coverage of the steps it takes to minimize flood impacts. While on the bus we there will be discussion on additional risk management tools and funding sources.

For details and an itinerary, please go to: <http://sfdmfloodtour.eventbrite.com/>

Mark your calendars!

<p>Cultivating Regional Food Security Conference</p> <p>Register now for the Cultivating Regional Food Security Conference at the University of Washington Botanic Gardens Center for Urban Horticulture December 4-5, 2010. For details, go to: http://depts.washington.edu/uwbg/news/food-security/</p>	<p>Organic Marketing Conference Dec. 7-8, 2010, Twin Falls, Idaho</p> <p>This conference presents the newest tools and techniques for marketing organic farm products. For details on the agenda, presentations, and registration: go to: http://www.pesticide.org/the-buzz/2010-organic-field-day-series</p>	<p>WA State Farmers Market Association, 2011 Annual Conference</p> <p>The 2011 annual conference will be held January 28-30 in Leavenworth, WA. Conference details and workshop information available by going to: http://www.wafarmersmarkets.com/conference/index.html More information, please contact Lori Musgrave at musgrave1@centurytel.net</p>
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WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Washington leads nation in “online agriculture”



Washington joins Massachusetts, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey in the top five states at the forefront of the nation's movement toward a global, innovation-based new economy, [according to a report released by ITIF](#) and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

Washington was number one in the nation in Online Agriculture, a measure of the percentage of farmers with Internet access and using computers for business

Just as in other sectors, the New Economy is transforming agriculture. Farmers and ranchers increasingly use the Internet to buy feed and seed, check on weather conditions, obtain the latest technical information, and even to sell their livestock or crops. In 2009, 77 percent of Washington farms had access to the Internet, compared to 60 percent nationwide. Washington farms with DSL as their primary method of Internet access went from 9 percent in 2005 to 29 percent in 2009. In Washington, 50 percent of farmers used computers for farm business compared to 36 percent nationwide. The degree to which farmers take advantage of the New Economy will increasingly determine their competitive success. Two measures of this are the percentage of farmers with Internet access and the percentage that use computers to run their farms.

To view the full report, go to: [The 2010 State New Economy Index](#)

To view the full report on Online Agriculture, go to: [Farm Computer Usage and Ownership - USDA - August 2009](#)

WSU Economists work to improve access to quality nutrition

Eliminating food deserts and increasing consumer access to fresh local produce are the focus of a study by economic researchers at WSU. Often located in impoverished urban neighborhoods, food deserts are areas with no grocery stores nearby. When compared with more affluent neighborhoods, food deserts often have a high percentage of fast food outlets. Eating fast food is strongly correlated with increased diet-related health problems.

Working with the Wisconsin-based Institute for Research on Poverty, WSU economics Professor Vicki McCracken and doctoral student Jeremy Sage received nearly \$40,000 to examine the inequalities of food distribution methods in Washington state. To view the whole story, go to: [WSU Economists work to improve access to quality nutrition \(WSU Today\)](#)

Office of Farmland Preservation

360.407.7474
Fax: 360.407.6215

VISIT US ONLINE!

<http://ofp.scc.wa.gov>



Farmland Preservation Task Force

Farmer Representatives

Jacob Anderson, South Central

Sheryl Cox, South East

Jeff Emtman, North East

Bob Hart, Chair, North West

Greg Schoenbachler, South West

Richard Thomason, North Central

County Commissioners

Don Munks, Western Washington

Rudy Plager, Eastern Washington

WA Association of Conservation Districts

Fred Colvin

Legislators

Senator Mary Margaret Haugen

Senator Jim Honeyford

Representative Joel Kretz

Representative Larry Springer

Non-Voting Members

Roylene Rides at the Door , USDA NRCS

Dee Caputo, CTED

State Agencies/Offices

Lynn Bahrych, Chair, Conservation Commission

Lee Faulconer, WA State Dept. of Ag.

John Mankowski, Governors Executive Policy

“OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE VITALITY OF FARMING, FARMERS, AND RANCHERS BY ENSURING THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN WASHINGTON STATE. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS THROUGH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE, THE OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHERS AND BY ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT. PROGRAMS WILL BE VOLUNTARY, RECOGNIZE LOCAL PRIORITIES, AND PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC INCENTIVES.”